

>> I do have some that think I will give them a break because they know me. But, unfortunately, it's not my fault I have to give them a ticket — it's theirs for what they were doing.

"But, it makes it easier because in the community you grew up in, people will trust you because they have known you before," he continued. "You can use that to your advantage when working."

Growing up in Flemingsburg, Polluck remembers how he viewed the local police officers, and knew from a young age he wanted to be an officer, he said.

"As a kid, just seeing the whole uniform, you were either scared of or respected [officers,]" he said. "I always respected them and wanted to be like them. Obviously, an officer, in order to be in a position of authority like that, was a good, upstanding person. And that's what I wanted to become as well — and challenge myself to live that life where you're being watched daily to make sure that you live the life that you enforce as well."

Chief Sergeant has set up his department so that Flemingsburg's citizens can

understand and respect the choices and actions of its law enforcement officers.

"Our citizens know what to expect out of each officer and in the past five years that's what I've tried to do," Sergeant said. "Everybody does the same thing. If someone gets a parking ticket or warning for parking on the sidewalk, each officer needs to do that. That's what I hope the people have come to expect — that everyone is going to be treated the same way."

Even before he rose through the ranks to become chief, Sergeant has been devoted to providing the best service for his agency and his hometown community. As an officer, for 16 consecutive years he received the Governor's Award for the most DUI arrests.

"I wanted to do this (job) to help the people I've known all my life," Sergeant said.

But policing the people you know has its down side.

"It's the politics, and that's not why I got into this. I'm known for treating everyone the same," Sergeant said, recalling an arrest he made of a city council member years ago. "The council gave me a hard time about it."

RETAINING THE BEST

In the past, the Flemingsburg Police Department has dealt with retention issues, losing officers to slightly larger agencies and communities that offered better pay and benefits. Sergeant, who believes even a full force of seven officers isn't quite enough to police the 2.2 square-mile city 24 hours a day, seven days a week, was determined to find ways to keep his qualified officers in Flemingsburg.

"The main thing to keeping officers is giving them the training they want and the training they need," Sergeant said. "I try to get them to at least two classes per year at the academy. And, if they do well, then I try to get them a raise."

"That's what I tell the mayor and the council — if they want the best person for the job, they have to pay them," he continued. "We can't compete with the Kentucky State Police or Lexington, and most small counties can't. But we can compete with Maysville and Morehead."

His continual push for pay raises in his five years at the helm has been successful



PHOTO BY ELIZABETH THOMAS

◀ Flemingsburg Chief Randy Sargent talks with a local resident outside the police department.